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NOTES AND DISCUSSION.

The Title הקורא given to Joseph Kimchi by the Commentator of his Sepher ha-Galui.

THE Sepher-ha-Galui of Joseph Kimchi (edited by H. J. Mathews, Berlin, 1887), has been provided by an unknown commentator, named Benjamin, with numerous, and often with elaborate notes, in which he defends those views of the celebrated R. Jacob b. Meir (Tam), which had been attacked by Joseph Kimchi. These observations are for the most part marked by a very violent tone, and the commentator describes the author here and there by the epithet הקורא, *e.g.*, p. 14, l. 3: מה שהשיב ואני בנימין אומר כי תשובות דהקורא על ונש: p. 15, l. 21: הבל וריק נחשבו. The editor does not explain this appellation, but merely refers to the two passages, Jer. xvii. 11 and 1 Sam. xxvi. 20, in which קורא occurs as the name of a bird (Introduction, p. xi.). J. Reifmann, in his notes on ס' הגלוי, which have appeared as an appendix to my edition of ס' הזכרון (Berlin, 1888), says the following: ר' בנימין כנה בהרבה מקומות את ר' יוסף קמחי בשם הקורא על דפו את רבינו תם ואת מנחם בן סרוק כאשר ירדוף הקורא בהרים. He, accordingly, explains this expression on the basis of the passage in the Book of Samuel, and in such a manner, moreover, that he employs הקורא as subject to ירדף, *i.e.*, as the bird in question pursues—other birds?—in the mountains, so Joseph Kimchi pursues those who are refuted by him, and is therefore himself designated by the name of this bird. This explanation is adopted by E. Blüth in his treatise on Joseph Kimchi (Berliner, *Magazin für die Wissenschaft des Judenthums*, XVIII., p. 128, 1891). But this explanation, based upon 1 Sam. xxvi. 20, cannot be the right one, because the bird mentioned there is not the pursuer but the pursued (see D. Kimchi's Commentary *ad loc.*, and Lexicon, s. v. קרא): הקרא is the object to ירדף, the subject not being given. It is usually translated "as when one doth hunt a partridge" (R. V.). There is indeed one explanation of our passage which takes הקורא as subject, viz., that of Rashi: ומרדף אחר קני שאר עופות ויושב על ביציהם. But this explanation has no support from other authorities, and even if we should assume that the commentator Benjamin adopted it, it would not be calculated to render the employment of the word as a designation for Joseph Kimchi comprehensible. I myself formerly considered the word as synonymous with הקרא, the object being to describe Joseph Kimchi as an exegete and

Biblical scholar, and the term being used by the commentator in a depreciatory sense, as if to say, he was a mere reader of the Bible, who, nevertheless, ventures to set himself up against an authority like R. Jacob b. Meir (Tam). (See my Introduction to זכרון, p. xii., and *Revue des Études Juives*, XVII., 276, note 5.) I must, however, confess, that this explanation is unsatisfactory, for since קרא (Kara) at that particular period was an honourable name for Biblical scholars, Benjamin cannot have used it as a term of opprobrium against an opponent. The correct and, according to my opinion, unassailable explanation of the word I believe I am able to offer in the following:—

In the Introduction to his work, in which he especially aims at refuting the decisions of the great R. Jacob b. Tam in the controversy between Menachem and Dunash, Joseph Kimchi apologises for daring to come forward against such an eminent man, the greatest authority of his time. He hears already how the ignorant among the people will attack him on that account, and puts into their mouth the words which Abner, Saul's captain, spoke, when David cried out to the king (1 Sam. xxvi. 14): מי אתה קראת אל המלך (see ס' הגלוי, p. 2, l. 20). Now, when Benjamin wrote his observations on the book, he called the author who had ventured to "cry" his contradiction to the "king," *i.e.*, to the highly esteemed and universally venerated Talmudist of Rameru, "the crier," הקורא, with special reference to the words of Abner, which Joseph Kimchi placed in the mouth of his opponents. Bent upon defending his master, Benjamin adopts Joseph Kimchi's Biblical quotation and calls the author of the polemic against R. Tam, in a contemptuous sense of the word, "the crier."

I would notice, in addition, that the surmise of Blüth, that our commentator Benjamin was no other than the pupil of R. Tam, Benjamin of Canterbury (*Magazin*, l. c., p. 130; comp. JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW, II., p. 327) is confirmed by the fact that our commentator bases his remarks upon actual instruction received by him at the mouth of R. Tam (p. 19, last line but one): ולי בנימין פתר רבנו שיש לו ראייה מן המקרא.

A Talmudic Proverb in Petronius.

THE celebrated author of *Darstellungen aus den Sittengeschichte Roms*, Prof. L. Friedländer, has recently edited one of the most precious literary monuments from the early period of the Empire, the *Cena Trimalchionis* of Petronius, and has provided it with a splendid German translation (Leipsic, 1891).